

*K. Dea Braun - Data Services Manager*



*Muriel MacLachlan Grace Flower Grayford*

*Allen Treach Louise Wamander Selman*

*Weathervane Community Playhouse*  
*250<sup>th</sup> Mainstage Production*  
*Opening night - February 28, 2003*



Weathervane Community Playhouse was founded, in the words of Weather-vane Historian Margaret Dietz, by "society ladies with plain husbands." The year was 1935 and, after securing the first floor of a barn on Marshall Avenue in West Akron, the four women presented 17 plays in the first year alone.

*The Laramie Project* represents a milestone in that history: the 500<sup>th</sup> Mainstage show. (The label "Mainstage" designates fully produced works and does not take into account the staged readings, Stage Two productions, classroom presentations or children's productions. So, in actuality, the number of shows Weathervane has produced is far greater than 500!)

Our founders, *Grace Hower Crawford, Laurine Schwan, Helen Troesch* and *Muriel MacLachlan*, had a vision to provide innovative theater and new works for our community. Using the talents of volunteers, Weathervane has continued to honor their vision with new comedies, challenging mysteries, edgy dramas and musicals.

The barn on Marshall Avenue, complete with the rooster-adorned weathervane on top, stood until 1951, when the next-door church's expansion forced a move to a building on Copley Road, which served as Weathervane's home until the present building was constructed. A capital campaign begun in 2000 (and still ongoing) produced two new classrooms, larger scenic and costume shops, and the addition of a "fly pocket" to raise scenery mechanically. Weathervane's founders would have been pleased to see what their efforts have provided to the Akron community over the past 68 years.

*The Laramie Project* was chosen specifically to be Weathervane's 500<sup>th</sup> production in order to continue the tradition of presenting new plays. Weathervane has presented many new and controversial works throughout its 68-year history. During the first season at "The Barn," for example, the theater staged Elmer Rice's avant-garde *The Adding Machine*. Over the years, Weathervane has also presented new plays a season or two after their New York debuts, including a few premieres of its own. Weathervane became the first non-professional theater to stage *The Fantasticks* in 1961 and *Dames at Sea* in 1973. The most previous production, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, has played in the theater three times, the first performances occurring while the original production was still playing in New York in 1942.

Weathervane is also not afraid to present controversial works on its Mainstage and in the Salon Reading Series from time to time. *Watch on the Rhine* (1976) caused a swastika to be painted on the building and provoked director

*Continued on inside back flap...*



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2002-2003

Sixty-Eighth Season



# The Laramie Project

By Moises Kaufman

& The Members of the Tectonic Theater Project

500th production

M A I N S T A G E

February 26 - March 15, 2003





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*In step . . .*

*In tune . . .*

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## 68th Season

### Weathervane Community Playhouse

1301 Weathervane Lane, Akron, OH 44313-5186  
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on the web at www.weathervaneplayhouse.com

#### 2001-2002 MAINSTAGE SEASON PRODUCTIONS

#497 - #502

September 18 - October 6, 2002

#### *The Chosen*

Drama by Aaron Posner & Chaim Potok  
Based on the novel by Chaim Potok

October 16 - November 3, 2002

#### *The Wiz*

Musical based on L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*  
Music & Lyrics by Charlie Small

January 15 - February 9, 2003

#### *Arsenic and Old Lace*

Comedy by Joseph Kesselring

February 26 - March 16, 2003

#### *The Laramie Project*

Drama by Moises Kaufman  
& The Members of the Tectonic Theater Project

April 2 - 19, 2003

#### *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*

Comedy by Jess Borgeson, Adam Long  
& Daniel Singer

June 18 - July 20, 2003

#### *Gypsy*

Book by Arthur Laurents  
Music by Jule Styne  
Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
Program subject to change

#### YOUTH/FAMILY PRODUCTIONS

July 27 - August 11, 2002

#### *The Emperor's New Clothes*

by Charlotte Chorpenning  
Story by Hans Christian Anderson

November 23 - December 22, 2002

#### *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*

Musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber

March 15 - 30, 2003

#### *Hamlet*

by William Shakespeare



#### WEATHERVANE WOMEN'S BOARD

presents

#### *The Brementown Musicians*

Performed by the Piper Puppets  
April 26, 2003



## Patron Information

★ **Emergency Exits** are located at the left front of the auditorium and the left side of the lobby. Front door and main lobby side exits will also be used in case of emergency.

★ **Restrooms** are found just off the entrance lobby ramp at the rear of the auditorium. Both men's and women's restrooms are wheelchair accessible.

★ **Handicapped Services** include seating for a limited number of wheelchairs. Please notify in advance if needed. Exterior and interior ramps make access easy for wheelchairs.

★ **Assistive Listening Devices** are available at the Box Office for the hearing impaired. This service is available thanks to the generosity of Virginia and J. Robert Wilson. In addition, some performances at Weathervane may feature American Sign Language or audio-description translations.

★ **Patrons** who are expecting calls should leave name and seat number with the House Manager. Please turn off your cell phones, pagers and audible watches.

★ **Beverages and Food** may not be taken into the auditorium during performances.

★ **Use of Cameras, Tape Recorders, TV cameras** is prohibited during performances.

★ **Curtain time** - Every effort is made to begin shows promptly at 8 p.m. for evening performances and at 2:30 p.m. for Sunday

matinees. We appreciate audience courtesy in arriving on time.

★ **Latecomers** will be quietly seated at the rear of the auditorium during a suitable break in the play if space is available and may take their reserved seats after intermission.

★ **Exiting the Theater** - For safety and as a courtesy to other patrons and the performers, please remain seated until the auditorium lights are on at intermission or after the show. Auditorium doors will not be opened until the house lights are on. Parking lot illumination assures that getting to your car will be easy and secure.

★ **Smoking** - Weathervane Playhouse is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is permitted outside the building.

★ **Lost and Found** items will be held at the Ticket Office until claimed. Please inquire about them during business hours.

★ **Comments** from audience members are always welcomed with interest. Please feel free to write to Weathervane or call us to express your views and opinions about our productions, play selection or other matters. We appreciate hearing from you and will respond. Please send your comments to: *Executive Director, Weathervane Community Playhouse, 1301 Weathervane Lane, Akron, OH 44313-5186.*

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## From the Barn to the Valley A Brief Weathervane History



From 1935 until 1951, Weathervane was housed in a modest carriage house barn on Marshall Avenue in Akron. The Barn, as it was known, has long since been destroyed but there are still a few people who recall its cramped quarters and especially the energy and devotion of the four ladies, Grace Hower Crawford, Laurine Schwan, Helen Troesch and Muriel MacLachlan, who believed that Akron deserved the best in theater and that volunteers could make it all happen. The plaque in our lobby lists the names of the other founders who shared their commitment and who joined their ambitious mission, producing everything from light comedy to Shakespeare and opera.

Though the Barn is now only a memory, its rooftop weathervane gave the theater its name and logotype character, the Chanticleer.

Except in 1948 when located at the Pythian Temple, the Barn was home to Weathervane until 1951. Then the organization renovated a building on Copley Road and became a more accommodating 100-seat facility. In 1960, Weathervane hired its first professional director, Bob Belfance, who served until 1992. Along with long-time custodian/ticket office manager, Nora Scott, the two-person staff relied on volunteer support. Paid guest directors and children's theater instructors served in part-time positions and Weathervane existed on a lean budget. Ticket office receipts, along with donations and community support, helped Weathervane meet expenses and created a modest endowment fund. Volunteers still nourish all of Weathervane's activities.

In the mid-1960s, a fund-raising drive resulted in construction of the present 263-seat facility which opened in 1970, one of the first enterprises at the head of the corridor into the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area. Thanks to Grace Crawford's legacy, the mortgage has since been paid off. Growing audience demand for live entertainment and theater education continues to underscore Weathervane's needs for increased community support.

In its nearly seven decades, Weathervane has constructed, torn down, recycled, painted and refitted stage settings for more than 500 productions (when Stage Two and Youth Theater productions are included). We've stitched up hundreds of costumes, created lighting magic by the multi-watt, crafted reality out of scores of stage properties and, most of all, shared the talents of well over a thousand amateur performers, who take their performance curtain calls to the applause of more than a hundred thousand theater goers. This effort is the result of volunteer dedication based on the founders' original philosophy that "all who can contribute are welcome."

Our volunteer archivist, Cue Fleming, has compiled the impressive list of productions back to 1935, a record of the dedication of those who have given their time to present each show to please the audiences who seek entertainment excellence each time the lights go up. Share the link to Weathervane's past by joining in the applause for today's performance.

*NOTE: Weathervane always appreciates donations of past programs, photographs or other theater memorabilia which can be added to our archives kept at the University of Akron. Thank you.*



## Ticket Information

★ **Tickets** may be purchased by telephone when you call 330-836-2626 Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. You may also purchase tickets in person during these hours. On performance Saturdays only, the Ticket Office is open from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Ticket Office is also open one hour prior to all performances and remains open through the first intermission.

★ **Telephone reservations** must be charged to a Visa, MasterCard or Discover credit card. Reservations are also required when using coupons from your Weathervane Super Coupon book, complimentary tickets or coupons offered from any other cooperating arts organization. Please arrive at the Ticket Office at least 20 minutes before curtain time to pick up your tickets. Any unclaimed tickets will be released for sale to waiting ticket buyers five minutes prior to curtain at the discretion of the Ticket Office Manager and volunteers.

★ **Special seating** - Please inform us if you have seating preferences, or require special attention due to visual, auditory or other physical needs. We'll do our best to accommodate you, but please remember orders are filled on a first-come, first-served basis with season subscribers and advanced group sales taking first priority.

★ **Super Coupon holders** are reminded that coupons do *not* ensure seats for a specific performance. Please call the box office early to reserve seats with these pre-paid coupons.

★ **Season Subscriber Exchange** - Please call the Ticket Office at 330-836-2626 if you wish to exchange your subscription seat for another performance of the same show. Exchanges must be phoned in at least 24 hours prior to your originally

scheduled performance. We can't always guarantee the same seats but we'll give you the closest available replacements. An upgrade fee will be charged when changing subscription seats from a Preview Night to any other performance. *If you cannot use your subscription seats, please call us at least 24 hours in advance to release them. We will recognize this as a donation to Weathervane.*

★ **Student Rush Tickets** go on sale 30 minutes before curtain time allowing students with valid ID to purchase remaining tickets for half price on the night of performance, pending ticket availability. These tickets cannot be reserved in advance.

★ **Complimentary Tickets** for cast members and production volunteers require reservations and may be used only on designated performances. Complimentary tickets distributed to special donors also require reservations but may not be restricted to specific performances. Please let us know you wish to use a complimentary ticket when you telephone for a reservation.

★ **Discounted Group Reservations** are available for groups of 15 or more. Call Weathervane at 330-836-2626 to learn how you can entertain friends, associates, or clients with a night at the theater or to plan a fund-raising event for larger groups.

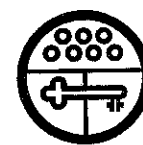
★ **Gift Certificates** are available through the Ticket Office at any time in any amount you choose.

★ **Recycle your playbills** - Anyone who doesn't wish to keep the playbill as a souvenir may drop it in our recycling box near the main entrance. We request that you do not bend, fold or deface the playbills as we will use them again for subsequent performances. Thank you.





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THE CREATIVE BUILDERS



## Women's Board

The Women's Board was formed in 1938 to "offer voluntary service and financial assistance to the Playhouse" and has been a vital part of Weathervane functions ever since. Women's Board has energized the youth education program, sponsored productions, spearheaded fund raisers and paid for many of the amenities audiences and production volunteers continue to appreciate in the Green Room and kitchen. Members of this active group are invaluable as hostesses, office helpers and hard workers on backstage projects. The Women's Board sponsors an annual puppet presentation for children and also operates the Gift Boutique and art gallery as on-going fund sources.

Weathervane Women's Board welcomes new members who serve an apprenticeship allowing them to explore the full spectrum of Weathervane activities in which they may wish to participate. Membership is open to all. If you are interested in becoming part of this vibrant organization, please let us know. Leave your name at the Ticket Office or write: Weathervane Women's Board, c/o Weathervane Community Playhouse, 1301 Weathervane Lane, Akron, OH 44313-5186.

### 2002-2003 Women's Board Officers

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Pat Obenour .....     | President               |
| Jean Questel .....    | First Vice President    |
| Susan Speers .....    | Second Vice President   |
| Alberta Carlin .....  | Corresponding Secretary |
| Nancy Zeigler .....   | Treasurer               |
| Evelyn Stiggers ..... | Assistant Treasurer     |

### 2002-2003 Women's Board Committee Chairs

|                                       |                            |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Marci Paolucci .....                  | Art Gallery                |
| Mary Wolfman & Barb Kistler .....     | Boutique                   |
| Barbara O'Connor .....                | Boutique Treasurer         |
| Henrietta Cook & Dorothy Kies .....   | Costumes                   |
| Lois Murray & Mina Agrawal .....      | Hostesses                  |
| Alberta Carlin & Pat Weill .....      | Newsletter                 |
| Marta Williger & Barbara Stevic ..... | Cast Suppers               |
| Marilyn Heagerty .....                | Office Volunteer Scheduler |
| Lois Simmons & Linda Shearl .....     | Hospitality                |
| Liz Raines & Thelma Coss .....        | Puppet Show                |
| Betty Williams & B.J. Zeigler .....   | Membership                 |

**The Women's Board welcomes new members.**



## Patron Generosity

Weathervane appreciates the continuing strong support of individuals, corporations, foundations and other donors who help finance the theater's operations, capital improvements and endowment program. Weathervane is classified as a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax deductible. Following are some of the many ways in which you can take pride in your support of the art of theater in our community.

### ★ Become a Weathervane Member.

Your annual support makes you a voting member of Weathervane Community Playhouse. You'll receive discounts on educational programs and other benefits, based on the membership level you choose. Members are invited to Weathervane's annual meeting and to other special events such as the Chanticleer Awards Banquet. Memberships are renewable annually, beginning at \$50 (Contributing), and continuing at Sustaining, Patron, Silver, Gold and Platinum Levels. Membership is actively solicited in the fall but is accepted at any time. Members are recognized in the Playbill.

★ **Give a Special Gift To Say You Care.** Special donations may be made at any time to memorialize a friend or relative whose interest in Weathervane was significant to his or her life. You may also recognize and celebrate important dates or current achievements of relatives, friends or associates.

★ **Remember Weathervane in Your Heart and in Your Will.** What better way to carry on your tradition of support to Weathervane than by a planned gift. By taking advantage of the tax laws which encourage charitable giving, the U.S. Government will share in the cost of your gift to Weathervane. Your gift can fulfill a specific purpose or project while providing your estate with tax savings. To help ensure that Weathervane will continue, please contact our Executive Director for more information.

★ **Check For Matching Gifts.** Many national and local corporations will match your donations to Weathervane,

increasing your generosity to the theater. Please check whether or not your company participates in such a program.

★ **Designate Gifts To Local Foundations.** Several of this area's larger foundations accept memorial and tribute gifts in the name of specific organizations such as Weathervane Community Playhouse. Such gifts help assure continuing grants to the theater's operations and special projects. We are enormously grateful for the impressive history of foundation support in this community.

★ **Sponsor or Underwrite a Production.** Our productions may be underwritten by local corporations or foundations. Benefits can include private "command performances" and special receptions for employees and friends when your business chooses this important method of support. Please call 330-836-2626. We'd like to discuss this kind of opportunity with your executive officers.

★ **Capital Project.** The new construction segment of the Capital Project included a scene shop with basement storage, a 2nd-floor classroom, a 2nd-floor rehearsal hall, soundproof corral with construction of a production booth and office, elevator and fly gallery pocket above the stage. Donations for Stage Two of the project continue to purchase classroom furnishings, update the lighting system, purchase and install the rigging system for the fly gallery, renovate the lobby and replenish the Capital Fund for maintenance and repairs through 2010.